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JPRS L/10141

27 November 1981

Latin America Report

(FOUO 27/81)



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LATIN AMERICA REPORT

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COUNTRY SECTION

BARBADOS

GOVERNMENT PLANS TO BUILD UP ARMY CONTINUE

Madrid DEFENSA in Spanish No 40-41, Aug-Sep 81 pp 157, 159

[Text] The government of Barbados will continue its plans for increasing the strength of national defense, which consists at present of a 150-man army, one Cessna-402 and three fishing craft converted into patrol craft. A 37-meter patrol craft, built in Great Britain, will arrive in Barbados shortly as part of the government's plans to build for the possibility that some day an invasion of this Caribbean island may occur or a coup d'etat.

The government's fears began 2 years ago when they discovered a supposed plot by mercenaries to invade the country and they decided to replace the Volunteer Corps that paraded on holidays with its ancient weapons with an army.

The modest Barbadian Army would be part of a joint effort by other nearby Caribbean islands that would assist each other mutually in cases like ship rescue and other emergencies. Dominica, St. Vincent and St. Lucia, all less than 350 kilometers from Barbados, have come together on the need for a union of their resources to protect their recently proclaimed exclusive economic zone (ZEE).

St. Vincent bought a patrol craft and Dominica announced that it will establish a Coast Guard Corps, but the struggle for power in St. Lucia between the prime minister and the minister of foreign relations has stopped that island's active participation in the plan. The idea of uniting their air forces was stimulated by the coup d'etat in Grenada in 1979 and Barbados, St. Vincent, St. Lucia and Dominica supported the formation of a regional military force, but, with the change of government in St. Lucia, that island made it very clear that it would not participate in any attempt at overthrowing regimes in other countries. Therefore, the plan was reduced to joint defense of the fishing areas in the zone and it has received the backing of the four countries, but Barbados was the one that has been building up its army since then. Starting in 1976, the Barbadian defense budget increased to \$12.5 million used for putting up a new building as headquarters for the Coast Guard and transformation of the army with the help of the United States and Great Britain.

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COUNTRY SECTION

BARBADOS

BRIEFS

NEW DLP CHIEF--Former trade minister Branford Taitt has been elected president of the opposition Democratic Labour Party. Parliamentary opposition leader Errol Barrow, who declined nomination for the presidency, remains political leader of the party. [Text] [London LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL REPORTS-CARIBBEAN in English 25 Sep 81 p 3] [COPYRIGHT: Latin America Regional Report, 1981]

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COUNTRY SECTION

COSTA RICA

PUBLICATIONS REVEAL LOCAL TERRORIST PLANS

PA072303 Havana PRELA in Spanish 1724 GMT 7 Nov 81

[Text] San Jose, 7 Nov (PL)--The Costa Rican press published new revelations today about local terrorist plans, promoted by the United States, for a coup d'etat in Costa Rica and for operations against Nicaragua.

The weekly UNIVERSIDAD supported the charges published this week by the newspaper LIBERTAD about the presence in Costa Rica of an organization of former Somozist guards, trained in the United States to carry out military attacks at any moment.

The two weeklies agree that their subversive activity, also targeted at Nicaragua, "coincides with the increasingly aggressive tone with which the Reagan administration is treating hemispheric matters."

Regarding the charges made by LIBERTAD about the presence in Costa Rica of over 6,000 Somozists, who received political asylum here after the Sandinist triumph in 1978, UNIVERSIDAD says that they train along this country's Pacific coast and in the northern provinces close to the Nicaraguan border.

According to this publication, this terrorist campaign was unleashed recently with the hijacking of local commercial aircraft by former Somozist guards. They also note that the incident occurred after U.S. information media unleashed a publicity campaign against Nicaragua.

The Costa Rican commercial aircraft was hijacked on 30 October by several Somozists residing here and was diverted to El Salvador.

UNIVERSIDAD recalls that some time ago, a similar group attacked Radio Noticias Del Continente's shortwave station several times. This station is now closed.

These terrorist activities will continue in Costa Rica, because the Somozists have the support of the country's reactionary sectors and of the United States, the publication adds.

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COUNTRY SECTION

CUBA

HAIG SEEN AS PROMOTING 'HAWKISH' VIEWS

PA072018 Havana PRELA in English 1856 GMT 7 Nov 81

[Report by Eloy Concepcion]

[Text] Secretary of State Alexander Haig, in his insane advance towards a war "any where and any how," has stated that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) can "make an atomic bomb explode" with friendly persuasion.

The statements made in the Senate subcommission that is discussing the military budget for U.S. nuclear rearmament confirm what President Ronald Reagan stated previously that Washington considers possible a limited nuclear war in the European continent.

According to Haig, the plans "are designed to maintain nuclear war at its lowest level," which means in Europe, without U.S. territory being harmed in any way.

The ex-commander of NATO, turned into the secretary of state of the Reagan administration, is apparently going through a process of "growing schizophrenia" that is cause of concern even among the European allies of the U.S.

According to observers, President Reagan has little knowledge of international problems and in spite of the statements of his spokesman that "his health is excellent," a medical report indicates some aural and visual deficiencies and the beginning of organic troubles.

During his 10 months of government, Reagan and the group that controls power have raised to the rank of military confrontation each and every one of the problems that arise, no matter in what part of the world.

Apparently the tactic employed by the "hawks" is aimed at raising the figure of Haig over that would like more moderate handling of world and local conflicts.

The secretary of state has already in less than a year a "brilliant" service record that catalogues him as a competitor agency (CIA), Vice President George Bush. [sentence as received]

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The in-fighting was brought to light for the first time after the attempt on Reagan's life on 30 March this year, when Haig "took over provisionally" the presidency of the republic and declared to the world "that leadership was safe in his hands."

Later on, competition was outlined in a mutual effort to exhibit an image of "movie tough" and, if Bush spoke in a warmongering tone, Haig used a tougher one and seemed more like a "hawk" than the vice president.

The 10 months of Reagan have given a great deal of work to his spokespersons who have had need to deny brusque remarks from both the president and Haig.

The U.S. Government has undertaken a race against time and its anachronic policy has brought the world to the verge of a nuclear catastrophe. Thus the Europeans have manifested their fear in the face of Reagan's threats and look with horror upon the insane ideas of Haig and the group that controls power in Washington.

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COUNTRY SECTION

CUBA

'VERDE OLIVO' SEES HAIG BEING ISOLATED BY U.S. LEADERS

PA121904 Havana PRELA in Spanish 2237 GMT 11 Nov 81

[Text] Havana, 11 Nov (PL)--The VERDE OLIVO magazine today carries a commentary saying that U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig seems to be on the threshold of his political decline.

The commentary, signed by newsman Elpidio Valdivia, labels Haig as an "intellectually mediocre man, an opportunist politician, who was never elected even for the simple post of municipal mayor, a military officer of scant achievements and a cave-man mentality."

The commentary recalls that Haig resigned from his post as NATO commander in protest over former president James Carter's policies. It was really due to personal reasons because Haig "wanted to run for the presidency of the United States, his old dream which was thwarted last year through lack of popular and political support."

When Haig was second to Henry Kissinger, "his enormous ability was concentrated in supporting and undermining his boss at the same time."

The VERDE OLIVO commentary says that "Alexander Haig's image has been, at least until now, that of a sort of lone wolf clamoring for military measures against Cuba and Nicaragua."

The commentary refers to Haig's controversies with Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and other top White House officials, among them George Bush, Richard Allen, and James Baker, White House chief of staff.

It recalls a report issued by Haig 19 years ago in which he strongly attacked the executive branch for paying excessive attention to the State Department, "ignoring the fact that the nation (the United States) is facing an essentially military challenge."

The writer mentions the U.S. magazine THE WASHINGTON MONTHLY which, in discussing the secretary of state's political career said that "what made Haig so powerful was his terrifying ability to look at a friend and an enemy at the same time."

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It says, "while Kissinger was Nixon's theoretician and political strategist, Haig was his aide, a not too brilliant organizer but a reliable administrator of the details which Kissinger did not bother with."

The commentary says that Haig was engaged in "intercepting telephone calls and press dispatches from colleges and newsmen, among other similar chores."

It adds, "any observer of U.S. politics can see that the four-star general is gradually being isolated."

The VERDE OLIVO commentary says that, "even before the president assumed office in January, some of Reagan's advisers regarded Haig as an outsider in their teamwork operation."

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COUNTRY SECTION

CUBA

'PRELA' RELATES RELATIONS WITH U.S. TO 1961 SITUATION

PA030247 Havana PRELA in Spanish 2329 GMT 2 Nov 81

[Report by PRELA correspondent Eloy Concepcion]

[Text] The U.S. Government has further intensified its aggressions against Cuba, which is reminiscent of the stage prior to the Bay of Pigs invasion launched against the island in April 1961 and defeated in 72 hours.

Experience has made the Cuban people aware of the methods used by the various U.S. governments against their country. They have begun to mobilize in massive support of a recent statement by Fidel Castro, where he protested the threat of an armed U.S. aggression.

Today, Cuba is a cauldron of groups in the streets chanting slogans and reaffirming their readiness to maintain the working tools and weapons at ready.

The evidence is obvious: The U.S. Government seeks to create the climate for an aggression against Cuba and to continue its intervention policy in Central America.

In order to prepare the U.S. people psychologically, the Reagan administration blames Cuba for almost all the evils occurring in the Central American region and for this purpose uses the most barefaced lies.

For the United States, which has not overcome its Vietnam "syndrome," there is now another fear turned into a nightmare and mentioned by its leaders in every speech, news conference or family meeting.

For the Ronald Reagan regime, Cuba is to blame because Central America has become the theater of peoples' struggles to reverse the "order" established by Washington. That "order" began to crumble when the Sandinist "boys" arrived in Managua in July 1979.

The sufferings of the hawks now ruling the United States has become more acute following their foiled attempt to crush the Salvadoran struggle.

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The Huey helicopters, the military advisors and the millions of dollars in weapons have not been able to crush the Salvadoran guerrillas. Therefore, Washington now is trying to find the "causes" of its political defeat where they do not really exist.

If the Salvadoran blow up a bridge, the U.S. propagandists say that "special Cuban troops" using "sophisticated" methods participated in the operation.

Similar propaganda methods were used 20 years ago just before the April 1961 invasion of Cuba by mercenaries, armed and trained by the United States.

The idea is to sow, in the minds of peoples in the United States and other countries, the idea that Cuba is increasing its defense unjustifiably and that Cuba is the author of conflicts and that therefore, according to the words of the U.S. rulers, Cuba "must be punished."

The steps announced by the U.S. Government at this time include a reinforcement of the blockade, attempts to isolate Cuba politically and diplomatically, as well as threats that "other steps are being considered."

The Cuban people know this. It is not surprising then that the country, which is now better prepared at all levels, awaits serene and unafraid the measures announced by the yankee spokesmen, that is, if they are implemented.

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COUNTRY SECTION

CUBA

VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT'S TRIP TO CHINA CRITICIZED

PA042118 Havana PRELA in Spanish 0140 GMT 4 Nov 81

[Report by Walfredo Angulo]

[Text] [no dateline] Venezuelan President Luis Herrera Campins demonstrated during his official visit to China that he is capable of reaching the absurd in an effort to make the foreign policy of his government coincide with the guidelines set forth by the United States.

The president, who ended a 6-day tour of the Asian country yesterday, did not waste any opportunity to try to attract the sympathy of the new ally.

Lacking bilateral objectives, the support of the Salvadoran military junta and the attacks against Cuba and the USSR were the common feature among all the meetings and documents signed.

Chinese and Venezuelan social christians fought it out to see who could be the harshest in describing "the necessity of resisting the Cuba-Soviet bloc."

Both governments agreed to hold frequent exchanges of information and high-level consultations in order to closely coordinate their international positions.

In the two rounds of talks between Herrera Campins and Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang, the two parties expressed their satisfaction with the progress in strengthening their friendly ties and the first steps were taken regarding China's possible purchase of Venezuela fertilizer, iron and steel.

For their part, the defense ministers of the two countries, Geng Biao and Maj Gen Bernardo Leal Puchi, held separate meetings, although there were no details on the topics discussed.

However, Venezuelan opposition sectors have expressed their concern over the statements made by the president during his tour of China and over the rapprochement, including that in the military field, with the Beijing regime.

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COUNTRY SECTION

CUBA

BRIEFS

OFFICIAL TO CASA DE LAS AMERICAS--Havana, 23 Oct (PL)--Sergio Ramirez, member of the junta of the Government of National Reconstruction of Nicaragua, has visited the Casa de las Americas here where he was received by Mariano Rodriguez, president of the cultural institute. During the meeting they exchanged views and experiences on the cultural work between the two countries. The visitor toured the exhibition rooms of the house. Ramirez visited the painting exhibit of Argentine painter Julio Le Parc in the Latin American art gallery. Others present at the meeting were Roberto Fernandez Retamar, vice president of the Casa de las Americas, members of the board of directors of the institute and Le Parc. Ramirez, a narrator and critic, has cooperated with the Casa de las Americas on various opportunities. He was a judge for the Casa de las Americas literary contest in 1978 and participated in the meeting of Latin American and Caribbean writers held this year in Cuba. [Text] [PA240218 Havana PRELA in Spanish 0020 GMT 24 Oct 81]

ARMED FORCES PUBLICATION SOLD--Havana, 29 Oct (PL)--Sale to the public of the magazine EL OFICIAL, theoretical information organ of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, began here today. Limited distribution of the publication began in 1967. The issue put on sale contains, among other material, a political-military analysis of Honduras, Peru's war industry and the tactical symbols used by U.S. troops. [Text] [PA302308 Havana PRELA in Spanish 0100 GMT 30 Oct 81]

SOVIET DEFENSE AID--Mexico City, 6 Nov (PL)--The Soviet ambassador to Mexico, Rostislav A. Sergeyev, said today that his country will use all of its resources to maintain the independence and sovereignty of Cuba and of other friendly countries if they are attacked from abroad. The Soviet ambassador's statement, made at noon today after he placed flowers at Mexico's altar to the fatherland in the monument to child-heroes, was published with banner headlines by Mexico City's newspapers. The evening newspapers OVACIONES, DIARIO DE MEXICO, ULTIMA HORA (of El Sol de Mexico) say in big frontpage headlines: "The USSR Will Defend Cuba"; "The USSR Will Defend Cuba at Any Cost"; and "To a Threatening Haig: Don't Even Touch Cuba--World Tension as Result of U.S. Military Plans." The Soviet ambassador said that he is in favor of general negotiations in the United Nations in order to solve problems between developing and the developed countries. He said that the Soviet Union avoids all military confrontations, "but the U.S. aggressions are becoming increasingly frequent. He also referred to the possibility of a nuclear war, though he noted that this would be inadmissible, as any confrontation of this type would be fatal. [Text] [PA082110 Havana PRELA in Spanish 0135 GMT 7 Nov 81]

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COUNTRY SECTION

EL SALVADOR

U.S. SOLDIERS ACCUSED OF HARASSING REFUGEES

PA082015 Havana PRELA in English 1906 GMT 8 Nov 81

[Text] San Jose, Nov 8 (PL)--One fighting between forces of the Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation of El Salvador and government troops has recommended in the city of Perquin, department of Morazan. [sentence as received]

The rebel broadcasting station "Radio Venceremos" reported that the guerrilla forces attacked for several hours soldiers stationed in Perquin, scene of numerous combats in August.

It also charged that army helicopters opened fire on peasants in the cantons of Rio Frio, Buena Vista and Achiote, on the banks of the Chinchontepec volcano, close to the city of San Vicente.

It also reported the detention of peasants in the town of Jocoatique, department of Morazan, in actions similar to the ones carried out by government forces on 24 October in hamlets close to this city.

Meanwhile the "SALPRESS" agency reported the denunciation made by Honduran doctors of the presence of U.S. army officers in the town of La Virtud, where there are Salvadoran refugees.

"The officers, members of the special forces known as "Green Berets," are wearing Honduran army uniforms and have gone into the refugee camps spreading alarm amongst the Salvadoran peasants in that zone," indicated the doctors.

They added that up to now the presence in La Virtud of two Americans has been confirmed, but that "there could be more in other garrisons disguised by the Honduran uniform."

The Independent Press Agency (AIP) disclosed the denunciation made by the national representative of the "Caritas de Honduras" organization, Albe de Ramirez, that the humanitarian organizations that are taking care of the Salvadoran refugees in the border zone are facing a very difficult situation.

She pointed out that that institution is victim of a number of repressive actions on the part of the security bodies and Honduran army.

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She mentioned the capture of several representatives of that organization in the border zone and the departure of the workers Luis Alonso Monge, who had to leave the country due to the persecution of the Salvadoran authorities.

She also stated that the parish priest Vega Guarita, of a town close to La Virtud, was detained by the Honduran army and that he has been prevented from visiting the refugees camps.

She also accused the Salvadoran army of going into a refugee camp in Los Monges, five kilometers west of La Virtud. People living there said that the soldiers threatened women and children and asked them to leave the place to the refugees.

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COUNTRY SECTION

HONDURAS

'PATRIA' SCORES APPOINTMENT OF NEW U.S. AMBASSADOR

PA041934 Havana PRELA in Spanish 2154 GMT 3 Nov 81

[Text] San Jose, 3 Nov (PL)--The Honduran newspaper PATRIA has charged that the appointment of John D. Negroponte as U.S. ambassador to Honduras is part of Washington's interventionist plans for Central America.

Negroponte, PATRIA reports, participated directly in the U.S. aggression in Vietnam and has a very bad record. The paper claims that the arrival of the diplomat in Tegucigalpa is a bad omen for the struggle of the Salvadoran people and the Sandinist revolution.

The newspaper referred to the systematic attacks that former Somoquist guards living in Honduras carry out against Nicaragua and to the coordination that exists between the armies of El Salvador and Honduras to repress the Salvadoran people's movement.

PATRIA, which is considered the mouthpiece of the Communist Party of Honduras, noted that the United States wants to impose, through Honduras, an interventionist policy in the region and for this reason it is sending one of its civilian experts from the Vietnam war to Tegucigalpa.

According to other reports, Negroponte, who is replacing Jack Binns, was also a member of the U.S. National Security Council.

Central American radio stations have reported that a sister of Manfredo Velazquez, a Honduran student who disappeared in September, has said that he is in a prison of the National Investigations Directorate (DNI). Zeneida Velazquez claims her brother has been subjected to physical and psychological tortures in various prisons of the country, according to the sources.

Manfredo Velazquez was first in a special prison for political prisoners in a Public Security Forces (FUSEP) station. Later he was taken to the 1st battalion of Lepaterique, near Tegucigalpa, and now he is in a DNI cell, the radio stations have reported. These radio stations have noted that until now all the efforts made to obtain the release of the young man have been fruitless because the top authorities in the government and the armed forces deny he is under arrest.

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COUNTRY SECTION

JAMAICA

WPJ CONDEMNS SEAGA'S BREAK WITH CUBAN REGIME

PA310310 Havana PRELA in Spanish 1625 GMT 30 Oct 81

[Text] Kingston, 30 Oct (PL)--The Jamaican Workers' Party (JWP) strongly condemned the government of Edward Seaga for its unilateral decision to break diplomatic relations with Cuba.

"It is an act designed to win favors from the U.S. Government in its undeclared war on Cuba," said the JWP.

It noted that the step taken by Seaga is also the beginning of an anticommunist campaign designed to hide the continued government failure to improve the living conditions of the Jamaican people.

It also seeks scapegoats to divert the people's attention from the growing privation in the country.

Without filing charges before the courts as provided by law, where evidence is required, without conforming to the rules that govern diplomatic relations, the government of Seaga has abused the parliamentary principles by acting simultaneously as prosecutor, judge and jury against the government and people of Cuba, the JWP charged.

In a document released to the local and international media, the secretary general of JWP points out that the break is against the interests of the people of Jamaica and will lead us back to the worst times of colonialism.

He recounted the generous aid offered by Cuba to the people of Jamaica, as evidenced in the construction of schools for Jamaican children, the medical assistance and other cooperation activities which the revolutionary Cuban Government has offered this island.

"We cannot forget the important role Cuba is playing in the defense of our black brothers in Africa against the South African racists, who are supported by U.S. imperialism, which Seaga now wants to please," the document added.

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COUNTRY SECTION

JAMAICA

PNP LEADERS VISIT CUBAN EMBASSY, CONDEMN BREAK

PA310266 Havana PRELA in Spanish 1620 GMT 30 Oct 81

[Text] Kingston, 30 Oct (PL)---The National Executive Committee of the People's National Party (PNP) voiced total support and solidarity with the government and people of Cuba in the face of Prime Minister Edward Seaga's unilateral decision of severing diplomatic relations with Havana.

A high-level delegation headed by PNP Secretary General Donald Keith Duncan visited the Cuban Embassy here last night to express support and adherence in the name of former Jamaican Prime Minister and leader of the PNP Michael Manley, who is travelling abroad.

In addition to Duncan, the Cuban diplomatic mission was also visited by Dudley Thompson, PNP general coordinator; Hugh Small, former minister of finance and member of the National Executive Committee; and Beverly Manley, president of the Jamaican Women's Movement, linked to the PNP.

The youth wing of the same party was represented by Paul Burke, its president, and Sheldon McDonald.

The PNP vigorously condemned Seaga's decision on ending diplomatic bonds with Cuba and the "fictitious allegations" wielded by Jamaica's ruling Jamaican Labor Party [JLP].

Duncan told the press last night that the PNP Executive Committee had met immediately to analyze the situation in connection with the break with Cuba ordered yesterday by Seaga.

Previously, the PNP secretary general said: "We totally condemn both the JLP government's decision to sever diplomatic relations with Cuba and the false arguments expressed to parliament and the nation to justify its allegations of interference."

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COUNTRY SECTION

NICARAGUA

BRIEFS

NOTE FOR UN--Managua, 4 Nov (PL)--The Central American Anti-Imperialist Tribunal has prepared a letter for signature supporting the proposal for peace in El Salvador. This letter will be sent to Kurt Waldheim, UN secretary general. Tribunal vice president Xavier Chamorro Cardenal has said that 100,000 Central Americans are expected to sign this letter, which denounces aggressive imperialist actions against Nicaragua, El Salvador and the rest of the region. Chamorro Cardenal, who is also director of the Nicaraguan newspaper EL NUEVO DIARIO, pointed out that there has been worldwide acceptance of the tribunal, "which bases its charges on true, hard facts." He warned that a danger of armed confrontation exists on the Central American isthmus because of the warmongering policy of the current U.S. administration, a policy against which the European peoples have already staged mass demonstrations. The letter will be sent for signing to the members of the Nicaraguan State Council tomorrow. The sponsors of this letter expect it to be well received at the United Nations because, they said, it is a contribution toward the attainment of peace in Central America. [Text] [PA082351 Havana PRELA in Spanish 1541 GMT 4 Nov 81]

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COUNTRY SECTION

SURINAME

REVOLUTIONARY FRONT TO BE ANNOUNCED 27 NOVEMBER

PA091618 Havana PRELA in Spanish 1218 GMT 9 Nov 81

[Text] Paramaribo, 9 Nov (PL)--The forthcoming proclamation of the "revolutionary front," which will be comprised of the country's popular organizations, is considered to be one of the most important measures of the Suriname process that began in February 1980.

Various political sectors have stressed that when the front is established on 27 November, it will contribute to the process of national unity.

The front, which is characterized here is unitary and anti-imperialist, seeks to strengthen the process of national liberation of this former Netherlands colony and eliminate frictions that hinder the country's development.

It is comprised of the four labor confederations and peasant, youth and political organizations that in recent weeks have held meetings to organize this front along with the government.

It has also been learned here that another of the front's objectives is to mobilize the people against the destabilization and sabotage actions that have recently emerged here.

The presidium of the front is made up of six national leaders headed by Col Deisy Bouterse, commander in chief of the army and leader of the current Suriname process.

It also includes Roy Horb, chief of the army staff, and Iwan Graanoogst, president of the national military council.

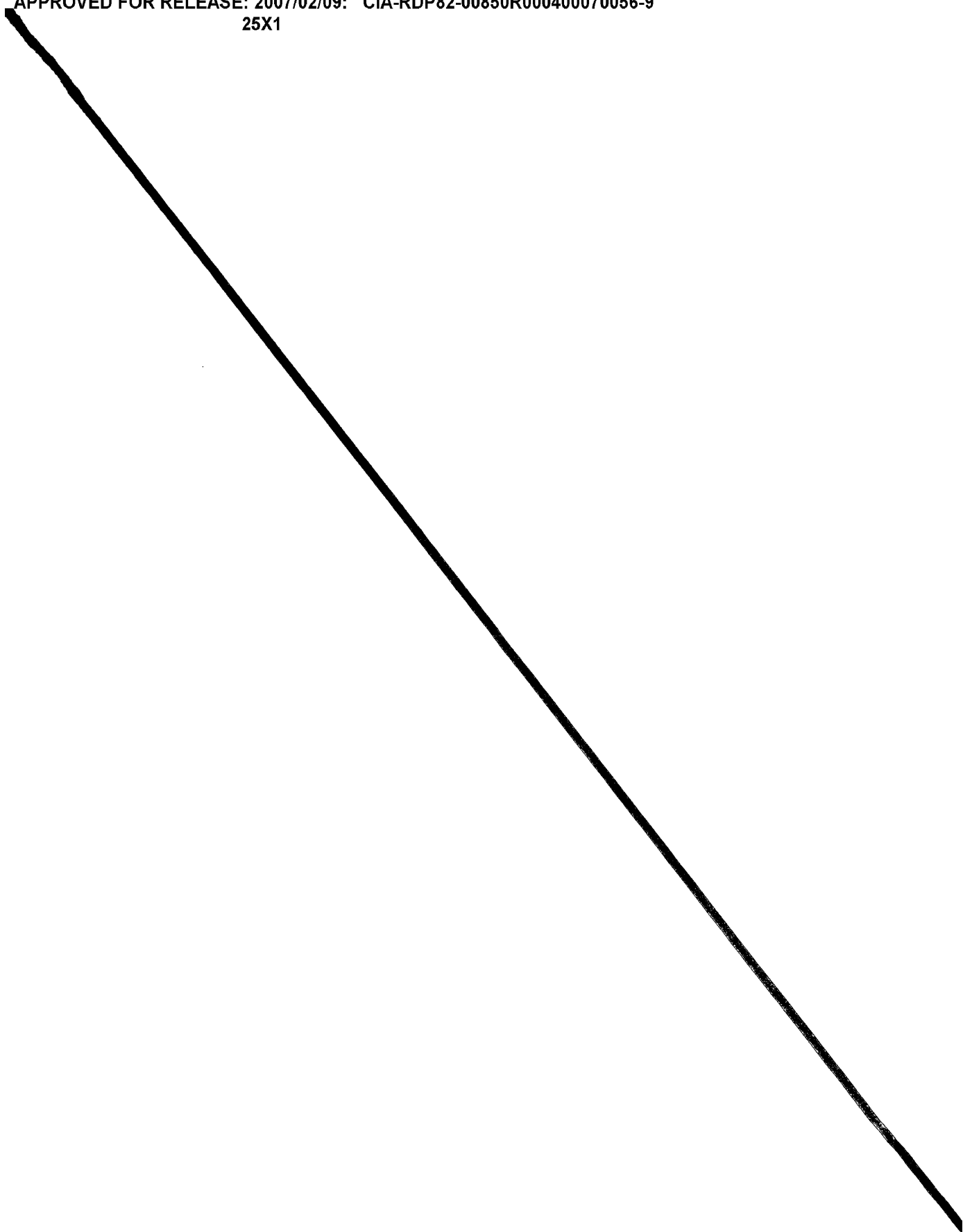
Other leaders include Fred Derby, a labor leader, Jiwen Sital, president of a peasant organization, and Michael Naarendorp, student and youth leader.

On 22 November, the revolutionary front will hold its constitutive congress. Meanwhile all the popular organizations as well as the rank and file "people's committees" will discuss its program, structure and objectives.

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COUNTRY SECTION

VENEZUELA

ARMED FORCES RECEIVE MODERN WEAPONS, EQUIPMENT

Madrid DEFENSA in Spanish Aug-Sep 81 pp 159-160

[Article by Caracas correspondent Hernandez Gonzalez]

[Text] Army

The Venezuelan Air Defense will be strengthened with ground-air missile systems and automated fire direction centers for missiles and antiaircraft guns. Also under consideration is the procurement of radars to be installed in strategic centers throughout the country.

The Army Artillery Forces will receive ground-ground missile systems. Presently, the Venezuelan field artillery is equipped only with 105-mm and 155-mm towed and self-propelled howitzers.

Navy

The missile-launching frigate F-22 ARV "Almirante Brion," the second of the six ordered by Venezuela from the Italian CNR [National Research Council] shipyards (see DEFENSA number 34), has arrived in Venezuelan waters. The third frigate, F-23 ARV "General Rafael Urdaneta," is expected to arrive in October.

The Navy has announced that its new naval plan "contemplates funding for the priority procurement of patrol and debarkation units," theoretical models of which, based on Venezuela's requirements, have been furnished to British, French, Spanish, and German builders. Apart from the foregoing announcement, the Navy had already announced its interest in procuring three corvettes, one oceanography vessel, one logistical support vessel and, at some time in the future, new submarines.

The Navy is currently evaluating air patrol and reconnaissance systems for the surveillance of the maritime ZEE [Exclusive Economic Zone], as well as smaller craft to strengthen the inland waterways commands. Presently, the maritime patrol and reconnaissance functions are being performed by the S-2E Trackers of Antisubmarine Squadron No 11 and, to a certain extent, by the AB-212 ASW helicopters carried aboard the two "Mariscal Sucre" class frigates already received.

The Marine Corps Command, for its part, has announced that it plans to create two new battalion-type UTC's [Combat Tactical Units]. Presently, the Marines have

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four UTC's, one artillery unit (mixed group), one amphibian vehicle unit, one security unit (navy police battalion), one engineer unit, one communications unit, one logistical support unit and two reconnaissance units (commando companies). The units are grouped under two Operational Commands (Eastern and Western), under the Marine Corps Command.

Air Force

The Venezuelan Air Force has received three Super King Air 200 light transport planes. It has also ordered, for VIP use, one Gulfstream III and two Bell-214 helicopters, one of which has already been delivered. Two new C-130H-30 Hercules will also reinforce the fleet of five planes of this type which the FAV [Venezuelan Air Force] is currently operating.

The FAV has decided to acquire 48 F-16 fighters to boost its air power. "The F-16 will maintain Venezuelan air superiority for another 20 years," said the commanding general of the Air Force, Gen Maximiliano Hernandez Vasquez, upon making the definitive announcement. He also said that the FAV had evaluated all the available procurement possibilities and had decided to purchase the F-16's as the best suited to Venezuela's interests. The other systems evaluated were: The Mirage 2000, the Viggen, the Kafir C2, and the Italian version of the Tornado. U.S. sources indicated that Venezuelan pilots had evaluated the F-16 in February at a Texas air base, and had indicated they were very satisfied with it at the completion of the flight. With this acquisition, Venezuela will be the first Latin American country to use the F-16 fighter.

It has been reported that the FAV Reequipment Plan contemplates the acquisition of some 100 aircraft for various uses:

Air Superiority: Acquisition of forty-eight F-16's to reinforce the Mirage III, Mirage 5 and CF-5 systems presently in use and to eventually replace the 29 Canberras, which have been used by the FAV since the beginning of the 1950's.

Tactical Support: The acquisition of a new lot of OV-10E Broncos is planned. The FAV is also evaluating the Thunderbolt A-10A.

Transport: An increase in the fleet of C-130H Hercules currently in service, the program for which is currently under way; replacement of the C-123B Providers, the strongest candidate for which seems to be Aeritalia's G-222; replacement of the Queen Air transports by the Super King Air 200; and standardization of the helicopter fleet with Bell UH-1's, presumably involving replacement of the Alouette III's that are still in service.

Training: Replacement of the T-34A Mentors, possibly by the modernized version of the T-34C; and replacement of the TMK-52 Jet Provosts probably by the also British Hawk trainers.

National Guard

The National Guard has recently acquired motorized units in the United States, especially for anti-riot operations.

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